



## **Staff Report**

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### **DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION ON PAPER TRAILS AND FOOTPATHS**

Honorable Chair and Commissioners:

#### **Summary**

In 2005, the City Council established a priority calendar item for assessment of Paper Trails and Footpaths within the city. This report provides staff's characterization of the current uses and the feasibility for improving these into a public path system. Staff is seeking direction from the Parks and Recreation Commission on the desirability of improving these pathways.

#### **Background**

Paper Trails and Footpaths are lands of public right-of-way delineated on a subdivision map or other deed that exist on paper but have not been improved for use. Over the past century, the City has been offered numerous paper streets and paths through subdivision's dedications. The City could construct roads, pedestrian or bicycle pathways on some of these right-of-ways. Some show potential for neighborhood connectivity and could be used for recreational purposes. Conversely, some of these paper pathways cannot be feasibly improved or would provide negligible benefit to the public for recreational use and the City may want to consider these locations for potential tree planting zones.

During the time that staff was working on this project, we noted that the City of Berkeley and the Town of Los Altos Hills were profiled in the newspaper for doing similar research and improvement to their pathway systems. The Town of Los Altos Hills has worked towards creating an approved plan for the town's pathways. The City of Berkeley has taken it one step further by upgrading the pathways, in some cases with the installation of steps on some of the steeper hillsides. Approximately 10 years ago, a volunteer group called the "Berkeley Path Wanderers Association" was created to maintain, construct, and notify the surrounding neighborhoods of the recreational uses of these pathways.

#### **Discussion**

Staff preliminary reviewed file information, subdivision maps, and county records to locate, quantify, and characterize the City's paper streets and pathways. Approximately thirty-two separate right-of-way segments were identified (see Attachment B). Out of the thirty-two, seven of them are paper streets, thirteen pathways were offered but rejected by the City, and twelve of these were offered and accepted by the City. Staff researched ownership of each pathway and

logged the information by neighborhood into a spreadsheet to produce a preliminary inventory (see Attachment A). The inventory entries are cross-referenced to the map. The thirteen pathways that were originally offered to the City and rejected could be accepted by City Council action.

Staff classified each pathway into one of the following four categories as a preliminary means of organizing the information based on physical characteristics.

1. Pathway is improved and appears to be in use – paved or graveled.
2. Pathway is unimproved but does appear to be used – dirt pathway.
3. Pathway is unimproved and is not used, but could potentially be improved for public use.
4. Pathway is impassable or otherwise impracticable for improvement due to steep grade, large obstructions (trees), lack of connectivity, or unappealing location.

The majority of these pathways range in width from 5 to 20 feet and are a variety of lengths. Improved pathway includes City maintained paved paths such the one leading to Alexander Park and Hallmark Park. Unimproved but used pathways showed signs of bike and/or foot traffic such as the unimproved section of Monte Cresta Road. Pathways having the potential for being used showed nice connectivity on the map but were overgrown with brush and often had moderate to steep grades. Those that were deemed impassable were highly overgrown with trees or had severe steepness. Staff made these preliminary assessments typically based on a single site visit. We would welcome the opinion of the Parks and Recreation Commission and other community members who may have better first-hand information about some of the pathways.

Staff visited each mapped location to characterize the condition of the right-of-way and assess the practicability of improving the right-of-way for public use. Each end of the pathways was photographed, if possible, and Public Works has filed these photographs for future review by interested parties.

Staff has identified several pathways that are a good sampling of how pathways could be improved. These pathways could serve as possible connectors to adjoining neighborhoods and could be used for recreational purposes.

They are as follows:

1. Locations 37 and 38 of Cipriani neighborhood. Though these areas are heavily wooded, overgrown and steep, they could provide a connector for those interested in traveling between Coronet Boulevard, Ponce Ave, and Pullman Avenue. Heavy clearing and grubbing and the construction of stairs, which would allow pedestrian access, would be needed.

2. Locations 49, 50b, and 51 of the Central neighborhood, could serve as a link for those interested in traveling between portions of North Road, Winding Way, and Ridge Road. Location 50a is currently paved and used and was a project that was completed by a local Boy Scout Troop. Moderate clearing and grubbing would be required for the installation of either stairs or a paved pathway.
3. Location 63 in Sunnyslope. This area would be a good candidate for the installation of stairs and minimal grading would be required. This location would allow pedestrian access to Paloma from O'Neill and from Molitor to Sunnyslope.

Also, it has recently come to staff's attention that some pathways might be considered for tree planting purposes. This type of pathway use will have to be further researched by staff.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact to this report. However, there could be substantial costs with delineating, developing, and maintaining the pathways.

### **Public Contact**

Public contact includes posting of the Parks and Recreation Commission agenda.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Parks and Recreation Commission provide input on the pathway inventory and characterization and provide direction on whether staff's proposed pathways for development of future new pathways is warranted and desirable. We are also seeking the Commission's input on possible funding and labor sources for a pathway improvement project. If the Commission believes that any other areas have potential in being developed (for walking, biking, or tree planting purposes), it is requested that locations be identified.

### **Alternatives**

1. Refer back to staff for further information or other options
2. Take no action

**Attachments**

- A. Paper Streets and Trails Inventory
- B. Paper Streets and Trails Map (24"x36"), (Commission Only)
- C. The Berkeley Daily Planet, Tuesday, January 15, 2008 – "Path Wanderers Leave No Carbon Footprint" – (Commission Only)
- D. Parks and Recreation Correspondence – October 15, 1969 (Commission Only)
- E. Parks and Recreation Correspondence – November 20, 1969 (Commission Only)
- F. Parks and Recreation Correspondence – circa 1969 (Commission Only)

Respectfully submitted,

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Engineering Technician

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# **PAPER STREETS, TRAILS, and PATHWAYS**

City of Belmont - Public Works  
3/27/2008

\*Sorted by Location Number

No.	Location	Description	Classification
1	Marsten Avenue (a&b)	Paper Street	Currently unimproved and used
2	Near westerly Ralston Avenue city limits	Access easement to John Brooks Memorial area off Ralston Avenue BCC #8, Vol 14, pg 65-68 APN BK 43	Impassable
6	E. Laurel Creek Road	Paper Street	Currently unimproved and used
8	Bartlett Way	Paper Street	Potential
10	Between 3400 Plateau and 3247 and 3301 Upper Lock	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 8, recorded December, 1926. Vol. 14 pg 65-68 APN BK 43 (offered and accepted)	Impassable
11	Between Lower Lock and San Juan	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 10, recorded Mar 24, 1927. Vol.15 pg. 29-38 APN BK 43 (Offered and accepted)	Impassable
13	Between 3040 & 3100 San Juan Blvd	5' Path BCC #10, Vol. 15, pg 32 APN BK 43 (Offered but rejected)	Impassable
14	Between 2947 and 3013 San Juan (used for fire access)	20' wide easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 10, recorded on March 8, 1927. Vol.15 pg. 29-38 APN BK 43	Potential
15	Between E. Laurel Creek and Alhambra	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 10, recorded Mar 24, 1927. Vol.15 pg. 29-38 APN BK 43 (offered but rejected)	Potential
16	Marburger Avenue	Paper Street	Currently unimproved and used
17	Between 2838 Alhambra and Monte Cresta Dr.	10' path (offered but rejected)	Impassable
18	Between 2900 Alhambra and 2901 Monte Cresta	10 wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 10, recorded Mar 8, 1927. Vol.15 pg. 31-32 APN BK 43 (offered but rejected)	Impassable
19	Monte Cresta Drive	50' wide Paper Street	Currently unimproved and used
20	San Ardo Way	Paper Street	Potential
21	Alhambra Drive	50' wide Paper Street	Impassable
22	2600 Belmont Canyon to 2855 San Juan	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 10, recorded March 24,1927. Vol.15 pg. 29-38 APN BK 43 (Offered but rejected)	Impassable
23	Between 2569/2565 Hallmark Drive Easement to Hallmark Park	20' trail easement (Highland Trail) Hallmark West Unit No. 2-B, recorded April 29, 1974. Vol.84 pg. 25-26 APN BK 45	Currently improved and used
24	near 2556/2600 Belmont Canyon Road to 2853-2855 San Juan	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 5, recorded Oct.6,1925. Vol. 12 pg 67-71 APN BK 43 (Offered but rejected)	Impassable
25	Between 2640and2700 Monserat to 2846 and2848 San Juan Blvd.	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 9, recorded Dec 1926. Vol. 14 pg 69 APN BK 43. (Offered but rejected)	Potential
30	From 2624 Read to 2700 Prindle	5' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 4, recorded July 3, 1925. Vol. 12 pg 45 APN BK 44	Impassable
37	Between 2644/2642 Ponce Ave and 2422/2420 Arthur Ave	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 4, recorded July 3, 1925. Vol 12 pg 43-49 APN BK 44 (Offered but rejected)	Potential
38	2419/2417 Coronet Boulevard to 2134 Pullman Avenue	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 4, recorded July 3, 1925. Vol. 12 pg 46 APN BK 44 (Offered but rejected)	Potential
39	Between 2590/2600 Coronet Blvd. and Ralston Ave.	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 4, recorded July 3, 1925. Vol. 12 pg 45 APN BK 44 - Used for Storm Drain line. (Offered but rejected)	Impassable
46	From 1133/1127 Village Drive to 1110 Alameda de las Pulgas	5' walkway Carlmont Village Subdivision November 5, 1956, Vol 46, pg 22 APN BK 45	Potential
49	Between 1825/1823 Mezes Avenue to 1816/1814 Hillman Ave	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 6, recorded Nov 13, 1925. Vol. 13 pg 13 APN BK 44 (Offered but rejected)	Potential
50	Between 1568/1566 Winding Way to 1811/1813 Hillman Ave via 1709/1707 Hillman Ave	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 6, recorded Nov 13, 1925. Vol. 13 pg 13 APN BK 44 (Offered but rejected)	Currently improved and used
51	Between 1526/1522 Ridge Road to 1563/1559 Winding Way	10' wide pathway easement Belmont Country Club Properties, Subdivision No. 6, recorded Nov 13, 1925. Vol. 13 pg 13 APN BK 44 (Offered but rejected)	Potential
60	Between 411 and 413 Yorkshire Way	20' wide pathway for Alexander Park entrance recorded Vol. 16, pg 41 APN BK 40	Currently improved and used
62	Between 1050 and 1048 O'Neill	10' wide path, bridge and watercourse easement (City Hall parking lot to O'Neill) recorded Vol 121, pg 64 APN BK 45	Currently improved and used
63	From O'Neill to Paloma	2 - 10' wide pathway easement. Amended Vol.17 pg11 APN BK 45	Potential
64	Between 1601/1597 Molitor Road and 1600/1596 Sunnyslope Avenue	20' easement Bayview Heights Subdivision No. 2, Vol 16, pg 33 APN BK 45	Currently unimproved and used

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